Theological Seminary,

THE PACIFIC

VOL. 59. SAN FRANCISCO, JANUARY, 21, 1909. No. 3.

Pac Theo Sem
Reading Room

A PRAYER.

Joseph W. Marsh.

Grace for my daily tasks
  Grant me, O Lord!
That I in each may still
  Obey Thy word.
Grace for the swift assaults
  Of sense and sin;
That I, a victor, may
  Have peace within.

Grace for the sudden stroke
  Of pain or grief;
Oh! let Thy presence then
  Bring sweet relief.
Grace for the weary days
  Of waiting age,
If Thou dost lengthen out
  My pilgrimage.

Grace for the dying hour;
  Let me not fear;
But loving, hoping, trusting, feel
  My Saviour near.
Grace, above all, to see
  How best I can,
By help or comfort, aid
  My fellow-man.

Forest Grove, Oregon.

THE PACIFIC

Established 1851

Representative of the Congregational Churches of the Pacific Coast. Subscription price $2.00 a year.

Published weekly by the Publishing Co. of The Pacific at 447 Minna street, San Francisco.

Application for entry as second-class matter at the postoffice at San Francisco, California, pending.

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CHRONICLE AND COMMENT.

It is said that President-elect Taft is seriously considering the appointment of President Eliot of Harvard to represent this country at the Court of St. James.

It is hoped that Mrs. Russell Sage will extend the time of her conditional gift of $500,000 to the American Bible Society. Only about one fourth of the other half million had been pledged by the first of the year.

Charles J. Capen of Boston has been teaching for fifty seven years in one school in that city, and has not missed even an hour from his duties during all those years. He is 87 years old now. It is a record, perhaps, unparalleled.

The Religious Edcation Association will hold its sixth annual convention in Chicago Feb. 9-11. "Religious Education and Social Duty" will be the general theme. Among the speakers will be Presidents King, Peabody, Eliot, Professor Coe, Jane Addams, Professor Shailer Mathews, Cyrus Northrop and Charles F. Thwing.

Dr. Chapman will sail from Vancouver, B. C., on the 23rd of March, on his world-evangelistic tour. He will be accompanied by his daughter Agnes, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Alexander, Robert Harkness and George B. Davis, the latter representing a press syndicate. After a brief stop in Honolulu, they will go to Australia where they will remain for five months. At the close of the Australian campaign the party will go to China, Japan, Korea and the Philippines.

Professor Patrick of Manitoba College, Winnipeg, is confident that the union of the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational churches in Canada will be effected in 1911. It is the expressed judgment of the committee of the three denominations that they have provided a basis of union which will satisfy the membership of the churches both as to polity and doctrine . The news which comes from Canada seems at this stage of church union matters in our own country almost too good to be true.

"The Churchman Afield" says in the Boston Transcript: 'At the conclusion of the morning service at Harvard Church, Brookline, last Sunday morning, after the pastor-elect, Dr. A. W. Vernon, had preached, a good woman of the congregation made her way speedily to one of the officials of the church and quietly remarked, 'I will keep the pew' A warm admirer of the late Dr. Reuen Thomas, she had been during this interim of pastorates a little uncertain as to whether she would retain her connection with the church or transfer her interests to some one of the other attractive centres of worship in the neighborhood. There is always more or less sifting of a congregation in the period between the departure of a former leader and the coming of a new one, and doubtless some persons at Harvard have improved this natural opportunity to form ties elsewhere. But I surmise that with the coming from Yale of Professor Vernon most of those who have been like this good woman, in a questioning mood, will come to her conclusion and 'keep the pew.' There is no question but that Dr. Vernon is one of the most remarkable preachers of his generation and that he will at once occupy a position of pulpit eminence in this region. His theology or his way of stating his theology may not be altogether acceptable to all his brethren in the ministry. He has himself to thank for having on at least one celebrated occasion made opponents and critics when he might have made friends; and that, too, without compromising his own convictions. But Dr. Vernon is not so old or so inelastic as to be unable to learn in the school of experience where we all have to take a semester now and then, and his unanimous call to this important church proves that he has satisfied even the most orthodox among its membership that he is the man to succeed Dr. Thomas. The charm of Vernon's preaching is its reality. No printed abstract ever does justice to his sermon into which he throws his entire personality, seeming to enjoy, as do few preachers, the imparting of truth to others and the pressing of it home upon mind, conscience and will. Professor Tucker once characterized Dr. Vernon as a religious genius and it is evident to those who listen to his preaching and who follow his conduct of the devotional services that religion, not ethics, and religion that vitally relates a man to Jesus Christ, is his own absorbing passion."

A writer in The Westminister states that the suspended membership of the Presbyterian Church last year was 47-239 and the additions by examination 74,829; that is, those who came out of the world into the church numbered only 27,000 more than those who drifted back from the church to the world. The writer is of opinion that much of this loss is due to the failure of the church to perform its function of pastoral oversight toward its absentee membership. We quote from his article as follows: "A large proportion of our Church membership to-day is a shifting membership. People are constantly moving from one community to another. The country towns are being depleted to swell the cities, and from one city to another there is a constant ebb and flow of population. All this has a great effect upon the stability and permanency of our Church membership. A study of the roll of the average church of 500 members will show a change in membership of from 10 to 25 per cent in five years' time, and there are few churches of any size whose list of absentee membership is not a considerable percentage of the whole. Now we are confident that if data were obtainable it could be shown that a very considerable proportion of the lapsed membership of our churches is composed of those who in removing from one locality to another have failed to re-establish church relations in their new home. Why have they not done so? Primarily the fault lies at the door of the absentee church member. Perhaps he has looked upon his removal as only temporary and thinks it is not worth while to sever his relations with the church to which he will soon return. Perhaps there is a deep attachment to the old church and a reluctance to part with its sweet and tender associations. Perhaps the new church environment seems wanting in warmth and cordiality. We have a deep sympathy for the

man or woman who goes from the little country church into a great city. In the little country church is a recognition and a work for every one; in the big city church where the membership roll often runs up over the thousand mark and where the benevolences are expressed in five figures the new-comer is likely to reason that his personality does not count and that his contribution is not needed. It is easy thus to lose one's interest and one's sense of responsibility. In some such ways as these thousands who at one time were active church members have lost their hold and have become spiritual derelicts. But when we have said this we have not said all . There are faults upon the other side. It is a fact, for instance, that there are pastors who do not encourage members who have removed from their locality to sever their relations with the old church. A young woman who had married and removed to another locality applied to her pastor for a letter to join the church in her new home and received an earnest appeal from him not to reduce his meagre church roll by the subtraction of her name. Still another on the point of departure was addressed thus by her pastor, 'Promise me that you will never take your letter so long as I live.' It seems almost superfluous to protest against such an attitude as this, for no minister can take it without knowing that he is in the wrong. A minister who for the purpose of keeping his roll intact will urge members to maintain a normal relationship with his church after they have placed themselves beyond the possibility of being actually identified with its work and worship is willfully jeopardizing their spiritual interests."

"TOO GOOD TO KEEP."

W. N. Burr.

On the desk before me lies a letter recently received from a friend who is an earnest-hearted layman—a man whose work is in the business world, but whose heart goes out to humanity's deeper needs. This busy business man finds time for many "good works," not the least of which are the hearty friendship letters which frequently reach this parsonage. A paragraph from this last letter is "too good to keep," and I yield to the inclination to pass it on to others. He writes:

"I was greatly touched by an illustration in the Sunday School Times recently, in which the Master is represented as talking with Gabriel about His work. The Master says:

" 'I have told Peter and James and John and a few others to spread the news in an ever-widening circle until the whole world shall know of it.'

" 'But, Master,' replies Gabriel, 'suppose they grow neglectful of it; and suppose as the years go by those to whom they have told the story forget to repeat it, and when it comes away down to the twentieth century those who have heard it are so busy with the business and pleasure of life that they are careless about telling others, what then?'

"And slowly and earnestly the Master replies, 'I have no other plan!'

"Oh, the pity of it!" continues my friend. "With this great news that means so much to the world of perishing men constantly held before us, and yet the church is so slow and careless in the telling! There is a great call just now for funds for the earthquake sufferers, and yet it does not appeal to me as it does to many, for the great multitude will respond to this humanitarian cry, while the calls of the great missionary enterprises are only responded to by the few regular givers. Don't think me heartless in this, for I do feel for those poor earthquake sufferers!"

As I laid this letter down after the first reading it was "with thanksgiving"—that there are deep-souled men sitting in the pews in our churches who have been reached by the Spirit, and given vision of things somewhat as they caught the eye and the heart of the Master. When the Master estimated values he did not overlook the poor, stricken bodies of men. With a touch and a word He was always ready to heal and rescue. He looked with compassion, with a great heart of tenderness upon people in physical stress. But he saw more than the human body when his eye fell upon human beings. His love took in all physical derangement, but the passion of his heart gripped humanity's deeper need. He did not come merely to heal the sick, or to relieve men in physical distress; but "I am come," he cries, "that ye may have life, and that ye may have it more abundantly."

When one is swayed by the spirit of the Master he is never found saying, "I believe in feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked, and caring for the sick—that is good enough missionary work for me." The humanitarian spirit is commendable, but it is comparatively a surface growth. When one has close dealings with the Master he is led into deeper ways of thought and activity.

God bless the gifts that go to the poor earthquake sufferers, and God bless every giver of such gifts; but let us ponder, too, this call, and this oft-repeated response:

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." —The Master.

"I have no interest in Foreign Missions."

—The Master's Professed Follower.

LIFE LESSONS.

I.—Response to Envionment.

I.—Respones to Environment.

No one has been able to tell us what life is. Attempts to define it fall short. Even modern science fails to tell us just what it is, yet its attempt is illuminating. It tells us that life is "correspondence to environment," or, to use a clearer word, response to environment. A fish swims in the sea and feels at home. Its nature responds to its environment. We say the fish is alive. A man catches it, and lifts it out of water into air. It straightway, wiggles and gasps. But at length its struggles cease. We say it is dead. That is to say, it could not respond to its new environment.

The kind and quality of life is indicated by the kind of invironment, to which response is made. For example, a man of high intelligence, and cultivated heart listens with keen response to the presentation of a great theme. A sodden, depraved man hears the same words with entire indifference or perhaps weariness. The differing quality of life in the two men is indicated by the differing response. The second man is essentially dead in a realm, where the first has life abundant.

By this same token shall we test spiritual life. It too is response to environment. We live and move and have our being in a spiritual atmosphere saturated with the appeal of holiness, purity and unselfish love. But over it and under it and through it all is the environing, immanent Father God. To respond here is to have life. Failure to respond can be nothing else than death. Truly to respond to God,—that is, to culvate intimacy of filial relationship, our possibilities of character, and to act accordingly,—this is life eternal. And this is essentially the word of Jesus when he said, "And this is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ."

ON GOD'S BEHALF.

By Rev. F. L. Goodspeed, D.D.

"I have somewhat to say on God's behalf." Job 36: 2.

Job and his friends were not the only men who have been puzzled by the strange providences and the mysteries which confront us everywhere. In comparison to the unknown, the known is as a drop of water to the unexplored ocean of truth. We know nothing of the origin of matter. We cannot discover the origin of life or light. We cannot point to the birthplace of force, or electricity or gravitation. Except by revelation we know not whence we came or whither we go. Our bodies are circumscribed, our minds are limited. Mystery surrounds us; darkness envelops us. In the midst of a perplexing world and of a bewildering age the Christian preacher needs constantly to offer, as Milton did, to that eternal

"Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and true"

the great prayer for light which was on the lips of the poet,

"What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That, to the height of thus great argument
I may assert eternal Providence
And justify the ways of God to men."

It would be a foolish in any man, even though he were a Milton to suppose that he had discovered a solution of all the problems connected with our life on earth . No poet, no philosopher, no scientist, no theologian has ever found a theory which supplied perfect intellectual satisfaction. Even with our present knowledge there is something to be said on God's behalf. There are intimations, prophecies, suggestions. These are profitable and helpful, but after all our logic and all our speculation, we shall probably have to come back to join in the cry of the patriarch, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him," or to bow with Tennyson,

"Falling with our weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope through darkness up to God."

Faith in the unchangeable goodness of God will be the ultimate basis of our hope and peace—that splendid conviction voiced by Browning,

"This world's no blot nor blank . . .
It means intensely and means good . . .
To find its meaning is my meat and drink."

Man's Place in the Universe.

There is the problem of man's littleness as compared with the universe, his insignificance in the midst of the majestic suns and systems. It was this thought which made such a deep impression upon the mind of Daniel Webster. What possible interest could the Creator of unimaginable systems possibly have in such a pitiful creature as man, placed as he is on this dot of a world? This planet, it was said, was only a second-rate globe attached to a third-rate sun. To suppose that the great God would select this sphere for the mighty experiment of human life and moral development and spiritual destiny was irrational and absurd.

But now come the scientists with their claim that our sun is the center of creation. And not only do we occupy the center of creation, but man is the central being of it. That is the conclusion reached by Alfred Russell Wallace in his treatise on "Man's Place in Nature." Wallace as a scientists is of almost equal fame with Darwin, and he tells us this planet is unique in its adaptability to organic life. He claims that no other position in the universe is so fit for the development of the higher forms of being. Intellectual and moral attainment is to be accomplished here, if anywhere. It is the old idea of design on a larger scale, applied to the universe. The universe is a manifestation of mind. Man—moral and spiritual man—was sufficient cause for its creation. God was to perfect a race of moral beings, and "nowhere else than near the central position in the universe which we occupy could that result have been attained."

So the undreamed magnitude of the universe, the glory and grandeur of the works of God in creation exalt man instead of belittling him. We worship mere bigness, but values are not according to bulk; they are estimated by quality. One line of poetry, one real conquest of the intellect in the realm of science or philosophy is worth more than a world. One deed of self-sacrificing love, one noble response to the call of duty is of more value than all the orbs that swing through the pathless spaces.

A French atheist once ridiculed the words of David, "The heavens declare the glory of God." He said the heavens declared the glory of Kepler and Newton and La Place. He was both right and wrong. The heavens do declare the glory of the astronomer's mind. But "the undevout astronomer is mad." The astronomer did not create these glorious planets and hang them upon nothing and fix their mighty orbits. God had to do that. The magnificence of the star-spangled heavens does not abase man—it exalts man, because man can trace the courses of the stars and weigh them and measure them. Therefore man's intellect must be kindled at the fount of Infinite Reason. The heavens declare the glory of God who made them and the glory of the human intellect, which in their mighty distances thinks God's thoughts after him. David is perfectly rational and true when in that sublime eighth Psalm he connects God's glorious creative power with the majesty of man's mind: "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, what is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou visitest him?" "Thou hast made him a little lower than Jehovah, and hast crowned him with glory and honor." God's glory and man's are thus bound up together. For what God creates, man interprets. As his child, God has taken man into partnership with himself to discover and then disclose the deeps of his counsels and the majesty of his works.

Whether you believe in evolution or not, you cannot impeach man's importance and dignity, for greatness is in the consummation and not in the process, in the goal and not the starting-point. What was the preface to your cradle matters little. The great question is concerning the appendix to your grave. Not what I was, or am, but what I am to be forever, is the supreme consideration. The church has its face to the future, and not to the past. Its watchword is not backward, but forward and upward. We rest, not on the link that connects us with Adam, but on the link that binds us to the angels. We recognize the relationship of our mortal bodies with the earth, for dust they are and unto dust they will return again; but we emphasize our spiritual and immortal kinship with the stars. We seek

for the true man, not amongst beasts that are "red in tooth and claw," not in the creatures that "tear each other in their slime;" but in the saints and sages and heroes of the race, in the Platos and Pauls, the Homers and Horatios, the Abrahams and Shakespeares and Miltons of the world. It is enough to know that God is both the guide and the goal of the creative process. No ape ever becomes a man. He stands where he stood when the morning of history dawned. He was a brute then—he is a brute now. But in man resides the power of progress. He exchanges his cave for a mansion. His stone ax becomes an implement of steel. His hut becomes a palace. His rude altar rises into a temple. The branching trees teach him how to swing the arches and raise the domes of his great cathedrals. His rude pictures are the fore-runners of the art of an Angelo and an Angelico. His imperfect language develops into the stately music of "Paradise Lost" and the yearning melody of "In Memoriam." His family becomes a tribe, his tribe a clan, his clan a nation. His primeval and patriarchal rules become the constitution of empires His early intuitions develop into logical certainties. His dreams struggle up into imperishable monuments in literature, in architecture, in music. The tentacles of his soul reach out after God. He rises to a sublime faith, to a heavenly devotion. His hopes overleap the barriers of time. His thoughts wander through eternity. He is conscious of a fellowship with the Infinite. He rests his weary head on the bosom of a heavenly Father.

Every advance of modern science confirms the fact of a spiritual world. We do not deny the reality of matter, but we preach the immanence of God. There is a nonsense prevalent in our time which denies the existence of matter. The stone post we ran against was only an unyielding and stationary idea. And the dog that bit you was only a pugnacious conception with white teeth in it. When you fell down stairs and broke your leg, it was because you came in contact with an error of mortal mind on the bottom landing. When a man steals your purse containing four twenty dollar pieces, he only runs off with some golden fancies from your memory. That is idealism gone mad, or Berkeleyism its own refutation, as Byron said,

"When Bishop Berkeley says there is no matter,
It is no matter what Bishop Berkeley says."

But the basic forces which flood the universe are spiritual . The laws that bind all things together are spiritual laws and they control the powers that reign beyond the limits of physical sense. There are those who say, "I have sought through the heavens with telescope, and the earth with microscope, and have nowhere found God." Very likely! But in this question is a sufficient answer, "Have you ever found yourself?" You boast that you will believe that and only that which your eyes can see! Now turn your instrument on yourself, oh man, and give us a picture of your soul! I am. I comprehend myself and am conscious of myself in the word I. Surely personality is proof of existence, but no one has ever seen me. That which I do not think does not exist for me. Is it then unreasonable to conceive of an intelligence which includes all being, which intelligence we call God? If you cannot prove your own spiritual existence by mathematics or physical science or photography, can you deny the existence of the all-including, all-embracing spirit in whom we live and move and have our being? We do not deny the existence of matter, but materialism is utterly discredited in our time. We are assued that wireless telegraphy will soon talk through the earth as well as around it. Wherever science turns its searchlight across the universe of sense it comes back with the exalted idea that the basis of all things is an infinite spiritual Intelligence.

The Miracle of Life.

This helps us in our thinking about miracles. To perform a miracle is to show the lordship of the spiritual over the material. It is to work in a realm above the physical. I confess that all life seems to me to be spiritual and supernatural. If it could speak, matter could truthfully say, "I can do nothing except it be given me from above." All growths in the vegetable kingdom are reducible to oxygen, hydrogen, carbon or nitrogen. And out of these springs a lily or a rose or a palm, or an olive or a pine. But not unaided! Something must be given from above! A sort of life-spirit reaches down and speaks to the substance, fertilizees it, co-operates with it and robes itself after its kind.

That life-power in the seed—is it not a supernatural fact reaching down to disturb the soil, that is, matter, in its slumber? Destroy these spiritual powers resident in the seed and called life, cancel their call to the inorganic and inert mass beneath them, and the whole planet would be as barren as the desert of Sahara—a vast sandhill without a tree, a flower, or a lichen on it.

Do you not see that even in nature matter is slave and spirit is master, and life is from above, and the supernatural is king over all? Then why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should speak to the human soul, redeem it, reveal himself to it and save it? Christ is the life of the moral world, of the soul, coming down upon it from above to arouse its capacities, co-operate with it, and lead it out into beauty and fruitfulness and immortality.

The Problem of Sin.

There is the problem of sin. Why did not God create a world without the possibility of transgression? Because without that possibility you could have no moral world, no character. Take away the power of disobedience and there can be no obedience. Righteousness is founded on the alternative of wickedness. No child can learn to walk without the possibility of falling. No soul can rise to character without the possibility of sinning. Moral progress is possible only through moral choice. "Where there is no vice to allure, there is no virtue to be won." It is a solemn prerogative, this power of self-determination; but it is necessary, inevitable. Because each soul must choose for himself, it is even possible for two brothers to go

"From the same cradle side, from the same mother's knee,
One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
One to the peaceful sea."

Necessity to do right or impossibility to do wrong is fatalism, and fatalism is moral death. If evil is impossible, good is also impossible. A will suspended in its power of moral choice is a will annihilated. Even Omnipotence could not develop character without presenting before the will the alternative of good and evil. God could make a thing, a machine, without the possibility of its choosing evil; but a man, a being of moral capacity, a being capable of righteousness, he could not make. Every man has his Eden, and every Eden has a serpent in it. The choice of Adam is repeated in every life, in each hour of life. Every day is judgment day.

Today we fashion destiny, the web of fate we spin,
Today, for all eternity, choose we holiness or sin;
Even now from snowy Gerizim or Ebal's cloudy crown,

We call the dews of blessing or the bolts of cursing down."

The Ministry of Death.

Why is our little day on earth rounded by the sleep of death? Man is a being of such transcendent powers! He reads the history of the millenniums past as recorded in the rocks. He can appreciate the changing glory of the sky. In the universe he can apprehend something of the infinitiude of God. He is a being capable of unselfish love, of sublimest hope, of boundless aspiration. Why is such a wonderful being, with the marvellous ability to look both before and after, to remember and to prophesy—why is he doomed to pain and sorrow in life, to the pitiful span of three-score years and ten and mortality at the end, dying oftentimes just as the treasures of intellect and experience become available, dying just as he gets ready to live, and in his dying involving others in pain and loss and desolation?

But plainly this is not all of the case. What if death is but the complement of birth! An immortal inhabitant of this world would be a monstrosity. How feeble upon such a being would be the impression of life's dignity and immensity. How weak the conception of our capacity and possible greatness! It is the horizon of our life that makes it "of stately and most regal argument." The brevity of our days determines the quality and quantity of our labor, —because we know the night cometh, we work while the day lasts. Time becomes precious as we see it passing, each year a door through which we go to have it close behind us and open no more. Human relationships, too, are as precious as they are because we know they cannot last forever. We appreciate the things that fade. To know that the sun will some day set upon these our joys, enhances their value and curbs our selfishness. Our tenderest ministry is toward those who are going away. Life's relations and associations are so sacred and precious because we know they are so fleeting. Because the treasures of our heart may be gone any day, our love is purified and intensified. Thus our limitations prophesy the illimitable and the brevity of time intimates the grandeur of eternity. Death and time say, Be true to yourself and your friends, be in earnest, life is real, do not dawdle, life is too short for anything but the best, fill your brief span with a spirit that breathes goodness and grandeur through all life's tasks and troubles, with a brave heart do the day's work and make life worthy of eternity because it is worthy of time.

God the Ally of the Best.

There can be but one destiny for such a life as that. Nothing but good can come to a good man. As man rises in the scale of being he develops domestic affection, becomes a philanthropist, loves his neighbor, becomes conscious of spiritual relations, and at last communes with God and loves God. And God encourages him with commands and promises and revelations. But will God entice us to faith and trust and develop the highest part of our nature only to disappoint and destroy it? We would not treat our children so. If immortality is a delusion, then we have this awful paradox, that the best and noblest of earth are the deceived, and the worst and meanest of earth are right. The grovelling, the selfish, the vicious want no immortality; and if there is none, then God has made the universe on their own low and miserable scale, and not according to the longings and ideals of the great and good. He has then disappointed the holiest, those who revere the truth and the right, those who love Him, those whose souls go out to Him in reverence and worship . Those who have lived for others, who have spent themselves for some great cause, who have sacrificed themselves on the altar of humanity's hopes have been deceived. That is the intolerable logic of the situation, if there be no immortality! Mighty and courageous and conquering Paul, your high hopes were such stuff as dreams are made of! And even Christ himself was the subject of delusion, and when he gave the blessed assurance, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise," God overheard the inspiring promise which filled the dying thief with ecstacy. God heard it—and turned the words into a lie! That is the awful alternative to immortality! Who can believe that God would turn the sacrifice of Calvary into a mere mistaken tragedy, a coarse murder, and then take part with those who mocked the Saviour's dying agony? Is God, then, the almighty joker, an omnipotent Mephistopheles? Whom are we to believe, and what can we revere, if the convictions of the highest and holiest beings of earth and of history are only the vaporings of diseased imaginations? Then the universe is a vast madhouse, and chaos or malice sits on the throne!

But it is not so. Love is everlasting. The sacred dead you deemed a glory of the earth are not dust, but have a place among the imperishable lustres of a brighter world. The fair vision of our hearts is a reality yonder. There is another Golden Gate, not marked on the map of any geographer, or on the chart of any mariner, but which opens on another country, that is, an heavenly. The transitory reflection which we saw for a few too brief and hastening years, points to an eternal beauty.

"What is excellent,
As God lives, is permanent;
Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain,
Heart's love will meet thee again."

Revelation Not Cause But Remedy.

There is a strange disposition in some minds to blame Christian revelation for the dark facts of human life. It is like blaming the physician for the disease he alleviates. The unjust and tragic conditions in human society were not caused by religion. There is a disposition to search for substitutes for the only divine cure. In prevalent fads and isms people seem to hope to discover clearer light and to drink deeper intellectual and spiritual satisfactions. They dream that in science or psychology or new thought there must be something different or something better than the church can offer. We all rejoice in the conquests and discoveries of science, but science never created anything and never will. It explains processes and harnesses forces, but all it finds has been regnant in the universe from eternity. Science is a Columbus to discover new continents, but Deity was there before with creative energy. Science cannot make a grain of sand, much less create a living intelligence. God has created and upheld all that is from endless years. What intellectual relief does a man get by throwing away his Bible? He cannot thus rid himself of all the problems of life. All the enigmas, all the stern facts are still left. All the vices, all the cruelties, all the sorrows, all the inequalities and abuses would still be here. Revelation did not create them. It is here to cure them, but it did not originate them. Yet men rail at the church and treat the Bible as though in some mysterious way it was responsible for the world's miseries. Throw the Bible away, and here they still are. The Bible did not make them, is not to blame for them. They antedated the Bible. The rocks and shoals were here before the mariner's chart. Astronomy did not make the stars. An angry sea is not calmed

by throwing away your compass. The almanac does not make summer. The Bible did not create sin and sorrow. Reject it, and all the facts are here. And you have no remedy and no interpretation! Then man's place in the universe is a mystery, and pessimism and atheism the only refuge. And to discard revelation for these is to be like the cow in the old story, which, while knee-deep in clover in the meadow and near living water, longed for the burnt bare common with its scant food and cruel thorns.

What if the solution of all our problems is in Christ? What if the life of Christ was "the human life of God?" What if his promises are God's promises, too? What if his sympathy and ministry were intended to be a picture of our Heavenly Father? In the Rospigliosi palace at Rome is the masterpiece of Guido Reni, one of the world's finest art treasures. It is a ceiling painting of Aurora strewing flowers before the chariot of Apollo. The coloring in this picture is considered the finest in the world. But being painted on the ceiling, the effort of looking at is exceedingly painful and exhausting. The neck becomes cramped, the head dizzy and the eyes dim. But the owner of the palace has placed opposite to the entrance of the room a mirror in which the painting in reflected, and can be inspected with no inconvenience to the beholder. Sitting comfortably in your chair you can look straight into the mirror and feast your soul upon the wealth of coloring and perfect figures in the glorious picture. There is no dizziness, no weariness, no indistinctness.

It was inevitable that infinity should be inaccessible to the human mind. To contemplate Deity is difficult and exhausting business. To understand God fully is impossible. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts. If we see Him, it is dimly and afar, in the dizzy heights of his creation and omnipotence. But Christ reflects God. He is the mirror in whom we see the fullness of the God-head. He said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Paul declares that he is "the image of the invisible God." In Him we see reflected the truth of God and the grace of God. He represents the Father's purpose of redemption. He lived and spoke on earth as God ever lives and speaks. As Christ taught and forgave and comforted for three years, so God does from generation to generation, and from age to age. Like the mirror beneath the Aurora in the palace at Rome, Christ reflects the divine attributes and the heavenly excellences that shine, in perfect and infinite measure, in the character of God. There is no explanation without him. There is no solution of the dark facts of human life. He has conquered the situation and solved the problem. With Him, although we cannot explain fully the sin and sorrow of the world, we are sure they will be overcome.

"God's ways are dark, but soon or late
They touch the shining hills of day."

Jesus overcame sin, He conquered death. Let us trust Him; let us surrender our souls to Him; let us serve Him. And then while we may look up with tears in our eyes we shall look up with the full assurance that some time, somewhere, those tears shall run

"Soon in large rivers from the uplifted face,
And leave the vision clear for stars and sun."

BEYOND.

If from the branches of a neighboring tree,
A bird some morn were missing suddenly,
That all the summer sang for ecstacy,
And made your season seem
Like a melodious dream,

You would not search about the leafless dell,
In places where the nestling used to dwell,
To find the white walls of her broken shell,
Thinking your child of air,
Your winged joy, was there!

But rather, hurrying from the autumn gale,
Your feet would follow summer's flowing trail
To find her spicy grove, and odorous vale;
Knowing that birds and song
To pleasant climes belong.

Then wherefore, when you see a soul set free
From this poor seed of its mortality,
And know you sow not that which is to be,
Watch you about the tomb,
For the immortal bloom?

Search for your flowers in the celestial grove,
Look for your precious stream of human love
In the unfathomable sea above;
Follow your missing bird,
Where songs are always heard!

—Phoebe Cary.

JOSEPHINE McCUNE WIKOFF.

On January 16, 1909, Josephine McCune, wife of Rev Harry H. Wikoff, Coast Secretary of C. C. B. S., died at her home in Berkeley. For several years she had at intervals suffered from an insidious disease that sapped her strength and baffled the skill of physicians. The funeral was held at the family residence, conducted by her pastor, Rev. H. R. Miles, of the First Congregational Church, and Rev. H E. Jewett.

Some of the words spoken by the latter, for many years a friend of the family, follow:

We are all familiar with the words of the Apostle, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Some one has said, "it can hardly be gain for us to die till it is Christ for us to live." Christ was the life of Mrs. Wikoff and therefore we have no doubt whatever that death to her has been great gain.

In her early years, one among many motherless children, she lived in an atmosphere of mutual affection and developed a spirit of courage and self-sacrifice and of devotion to her loved ones that marked her whole life. She was educated at Ripon College, Wisconsin. During fifteen years of her maried life, when her husband was pastor first of a church in a rural community and later of one in a hard city parish, she stood at his side, an efficient helper in all his labors and since he took up the larger work of his present position fourteen years ago she has shared his devotion to this work, and in many ways rendered enthusiastic aid in the details of his routine duties. In the Berkeley church, when health permitted, she was a capable and efficient Sunday-school teacher and an interested member of the Woman's Missionary Society.

But her home life was especially winsome. "The heart of her husband trusted in her." "Her children arise up

and call her blessed." She could do many things well. She saw the sunny side of events. She brought good cheer into the hearts of those about her. She was strong in her attachments. By a supreme effort, her last going out was to the home of a daughter on Christmas day, where at a family reunion she was the center of good cheer and the object of beautiful devotion.

But she was made perfect through suffering, and she endeared as seeing Him who is invisible. Her patience, her courage, her thoughtfulness for others, and her trust in God were marked features of the sick-room. Christ was her life and when He called she was ready to go. She has gained by dying, and those who are left behind may well be comforted. That they have the sympathy of those who appreciate their loss they may well be assured. He whom she loved and served will not be unmindful of them.

Mrs. Wikoff leaves besides her husband, three children, Miss Margaret, Clarence, and Mrs. E. L. Brock, all of Berkeley.

THE BRAVEST BATTLE THAT EVER WAS FOUGHT.

The bravest battle that ever was fought;
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not;
'Twas fought by the mothers of men.

Nay, not with cannon or battle shot,
With sword or nobler pen;
Nay not with eloquent word or thought,
From mouths of wonderful men.

But deep in a walled-up woman's heart—
Of woman that would not yield,
But bravely, silently bore her part—
Lo! there is that battlefield.

No marshaling troop, no bivouac song;
No banner to gleam and wave;
But O! these battles they last so long—
From babyhood to the grave!

Yet, faithful still as a bridge of stars,
She fights in her walled up town—
Fights on and on in the endless wars,
Then silent, unseen—goes down.

Oh, ye with banners and battle shot,
And soldiers to shout and praise,
I tell you the kingliest victories fought
Were fought in these silent ways.

O, spotless woman in world of shame!
With splendid and silent scorn,
Go back to God as white as you came,
The kingliest warror born.

—Joaquin Miller.

NOTES.

Dr. Horace Day, of First Church, Los Angeles, a director of the National Home Missionary Society, was in Attendance at the Annual Directors' Meeting in Cleveland.

President George A. Gates, after seven years, has been compelled by stress of nervous exhaustion, to resign from Pomona College. This change takes place with entire harmany between him and the trustees, who presented him with a purse, and continue his salary till October, and request him to preside at the next Commencement . He is relieved at once from his official duties, and for a season it is possible that he may seek rest on the Hawaiian Islands. Mainwhile, provision is made for the business management and internal administration of the college. Rev. Edward F. Goff, recently pastor at Riverside, is growing in his efficient handling of the business office. A strong committee is charged with the selection of a successor to Dr. Gates.

"Take this solace for your woe:
God's love never groweth dim;
All of goodness that you know,
All your loving comes from him!
You say, 'She has gone to death!'
Very tenderly, God saith:
'Better so; I make her mine,
And my love exceedeth thine!' "

Among the Churches

CALIFORNIA.

Fruitvale.—At the January communion twelve new members were received, nine of them by letter.

San Rafael.—Six persons were received into the church at a recent communion; four more were detained on account of illness, etc. Since the new year eight others have manifested a desire to unite with the church.

Santa Ana—Congregations that tax the capacity of the church, greet the new pastor, Rev. Charles H. Seccombe. The turning of people away from the Sunday evening service for lack of room demonstrates the need of a new church building. Eleven have been voted into church membership since January 1, this year.

San Francisco, Bethlehem.—The annual business meeting was held Monday evening, Jan. 11th. The meeting was preceded by a dinner served by the ladies of the church. Three large tables beautifully decorated, and laden with good things, were filled with members and friends of the church. The roll of the church was called and a large majority of the members responded present. The last year has been a very hard one for the church, nevertheless the reports were very encouraging. Fourteen new members added to the church roll. New pews have been put in and the interior of the church renovated and beautifully decorated. The report of the treasurer showed $1,456 raised for all purposes during the year. The business was transacted in perfect harmony. Many of the members feel that it was the best business meeting in the history of the church.

Loomis.—On December 31st, the Congregational church of this place held a very enjoyable watch night reception in honor of Rev. W. F. Eckles, who has recently accepted the pastorate of the Loomis and Rocklin churches. The entertainment of the evening began with a program consisting of vocal and instrumental music and recitations and was concluded by a temperance drama entitled, "The Little Brown Jug," by a number of the young people. At the conclusion of the program about two hundred and fifty people partook of a banquet, which was served to all by the ladies of the church. All departed for home in the wee sma' hours of the first day of the new year, declaring that

they had spent a most enjoyable and profitable evening. On the first Sunday in January was held the regular communion of the year 1907. Twelve members were received into the church.

Bakersfield.—Bakersfield church held its annual supper and business meeting January 8th. The ladies served a fine supper to over one hundred, after which the business meeting was held in the audience room. The church has two Endeavor Societies, a Ladies' Aid, a Men's Club, a Girls' Club, a Centurion Club, a Mission Study Class, and a Chinese Mission. Reports from all departments of the church work showed an excellent condition. Thirty-two new members have been received into the church during the past year, three of whom are Chinese. It was voted to increase the pastor's salary $150, making it $1350. The apportionment plan for missionary work has been followed, the church raising its full quota for the year, and more. New officers were elected, and under the able leadership of the pastor, Rev. E. R. Fuller, the new year bids fair to be a good one.

Pasadena.—At the recent annual meeting of the First Congregational Church 250 persons sat at the banquet. The report of the church clerk showed a membership of 384, 55 having been received during the year. For current expenses $5,300 was contributed and $1,450 for benevolences especially significant were the figures given by the Woman's Church Aid Society, through its secretary. This society has had an average attendance of 119 at its monthly meetings, the largest attendance being 140, smallest 96. Over $1,300 was raised for various purposes by this society during the year. The Woman's Missionary Society had receipts amounting to $581.40. This society has pledged $600 for the missionary year, which ends in April. The Sunday-school has an enrollment of 201, with 56 in the Home Department and 30 on the Cradle Roll. One-half of the adult scholars are members of the church, 13 having united during the last year.

Benicia.—The annual dinner and business meeting of the church was held on the evening of Jan. 12th. The night was stormy but about 70 sat down to the tables to eat of the bountiful repast furnished by the Ladies' Social Circle. The treasurer reported receipts from all sources amounting to $1056, with all bills paid, and a cash balance of $1 in the treasury. The Ladies' Social Circle raised $320 during the year, $250 of which went toward pastor's salary, and paying a deficit of $85 from 1907. The Sunday-school had an average attendance of 50 during the year, and the Endeavor Society has been reorganized, and increased in membership. Ten members have been removed by letter and death, and seven received, two on confession and five by letter, an apparent loss of three, but really a gain, as those dismissed by letter had removed before 1908, while one new and valuable family has been added to the working force in the past year. On the whole, while the town shows little signs of progress, the church has held its own and faces the new year hopefully. The pastor, Rev. B. St. John is just entering on the fifth year of service.

Pomona.—Company "A," 2nd Regiment United Boys' Brigade of America, connected with the Pilgrim Church of Pomona, is doing great things for the young life in the church. Starting with 23 boys of the Sunday-school the company has now 60 members. Nearly all of the 37 new members are boys from outside of the school who were not in any other church or Sunday-school. Every boy is in his class in Sunday-school and the Brigade has more than doubled every class of boys between the ages of 12 and 18 years. Many boys have asked to be allowed to unite with the church and the officers are planning for a special service at that time. The Brigade is equipped with a hall, gymnasium, suits and are soon to have guns. The company is the "pet" of the church and has proven the best means of reaching the boys which has been tried. While the military feature is kept prominently before the company, it is only a means to an end, for no opoprtunity is lost to try to win the boy for Christ. On Xmas Sunday the boys attended church in a body. At the vesper service on Sunday, Jan. 3, 1909, seven members were received on confession of their faith and ten by letter. There was an attendance of 257 at Sunday-school on Sunday, Jan. 3, 1909.

Oleander.—The year 1908 was full of good things for Oleander church. The average attendance increased from month to month, summer months included, up to the close of the year. The parsonage and church have been painted during the year and other repairs have been made . The ladies of the church have been working untiringly. Some of the results of their labors may be seen on every side. They furnished the means to paper the parsonage throughout, to carpet the church, sent a box of fruit, etc. Nineteen have been added to the church, nearly all adults. On several occasions the Endeavorers have taken charge of the service during absence of pastor. The different organizations have developed some active workers along various lines. The Woman's Missionary Society started off the new year by sending some money to the sufferers from th earth quake in Italy and by giving $18:60 to the H. M. S. The pastor was sick with la grippe last Sabbath and the church members took charge of the morning service. One brother made the announcements, another the prayer; one good sister read the Scripture lesson and another read the sermon which the pastor had prepared. If these friends only knew how glad they made the pastor's heart they would be well paid. We are going to pull together during 1909 and try and make this year the "best yet."

WASHINGTON.

North Yakima.—Rev. Alonzo King, of Sandusky, Ohio, has accepted the call to the pastorate of this church.

Walla Walla.—Twenty persons were received to membership at the recent communion service, seven on confession. Congregations are large and the people have a mind to work.

Seattle, Columbia.—This church reports a very successful year. There has been a surplus in the treasury each quarter; the minister's salary has been increased two hundred dollars and the membership has increased to 193.

Newport.—On New Year's Eve a Brotherhood was organized and a free reading room in the basement of the church with games and other attractions for the young men was planned for. Twenty-three have been added to the membership during the six months Mr. Rice has been here and more expect to unite in January. Lots for churches in Wsk and Ione have been offered and may be accepted. It is thought that buildings can be erected without C. C. B. S. aid. Special meetings at Newport are planned for February.

Seattle, University.—In spite of a severe snow storm two hundred and thirty sat down to the annual church dinner.

The reports from all showed a year of great progress; in deed they were the best reports ever presented. During th year 105 were received into the church; the expenses were $477, excluding cost of building; the contributions to our own boards were $925—the largest yet. It was voted to finish the building at once. The spirit of the meeting was most enthusiastic. Rev. H. C. Mason has been pastor for five years and each year his salary has been raised two hundred dollars.

Seattle, Plymouth.—Four hundred and twenty-five members sat at thirty tables, each presided over by a man and wife and served by a head waiter and two assistants. Greetings from Rev. and Mrs. E. W. Ellis and Rev. and Mrs. V. P. Eastman, the Plymouth missionaries in China were printed and placed at each plate. The annual reports were presented and a budget of $17,000 for the current expenses of next year was adopted. The Sunday-school has a membership of 575; the church received 185 during the year making the membership 1135. Mrs. Stotenberg spoke on "The Ideal Church Man," Mr. Everett Smith on "The Ideal Church Woman," and Judge W. D. Wood on "The Ideal Pastor." This was the first meeting to be held in the new annex.

Natchez.—The Y. P. S. C. E. recently netted $32 from "Ye Old District School." This Society has taken care of the regular Sunday night services for the last five years. The annual report for the Year Book will show 63 names on the church records—14 received during the year, 7 on confession and 7 by letter; $900 paid for home expenses, $58 for foreign missions—altogether $170 for benevolent purposes, which is about $100 more than ever paid before. A most delightful reception was tendered the pastor and his wife by a large number of the membership and friends of the church on the date of the 35th anniversary of their wedding, at which they were the recipients of some beautiful chinaware and cut glass. The morning congregations fill the house. A new church building is in the air and we hope to land it soon.

A Notable Men's Meeting.—155 members of the Seattle Congregational Brotherhood gathered about the banquet tables at Pilgrim Church on New Year's night for the annual meeting. President E. L. Smith presided. The secretary, J. A. Van Smith, read his report, briefly recounting the origin of the Brotherhood a year ago, telling what was done at the twelve meetings held by the Brotherhood Council and at the five noon day luncheons held during the year. Laymen's Sessions were also carried throught at the State Conference at North Yakima and at the joint meeting of the Northwestern and Tacoma Associations and fifty men went to twenty-five churches in the Northwestern Associations on the "Self Support in 1910" campaign. The work of the Brotherhood could not be tabulated in any report and doubtless more good has come to the men and the work of the local brotherhoods than even to the specific work attempted by the city organization. There are now 770 members on the roll and recent accessions that have not been reported will increase this number. After the secretary's report Dr. Van Horn brought the matter of a Congregational Exhibit at the A. Y. P. E. to the front but no action was taken. Revs. Clarke, Kantner, Strong, Weage, Henry, Osgood, Bushnell and Freeland spoke on the good accomplished during the past year and Rev. H. C. Mason of the prospects for the coming year. Reports of the work of the benevolence department were made by Mr. A. S. Burwell, R. C. McAllister and Dr. Bailey. The Department of Church Work presented plans that are proposed as tending to put church work on a more business-like basis. Hon W. H. Lewis, Dr. Jordan, Dr. Kilbourne and Mr. J. A. Van Smith gave some valuable suggestions. Judge Wood spoke for the Department of Civics, touching the saloon and race track evil as affecting our locality and the corruption in our political life. The following officers were re-elected: President, Rev. E. L. Smith; vice-president, L. J. Colman; secretary, J. A. Van Smith; treasurer, A. J. Goddard. Doubtless the fact that it was New Year's night kept many away who would otherwise have been glad to have such an opportunity to get an uplift and new ideas. The meeting was very enthusiastic and to even those who have kept in touch with the work of the Brotherhood it must have been an inspiration to have presented an outline of the year's work. The machinery is in order now, the day of taking time to organize isc past. Doubtless a year of earnest activity is before the men of our churches in Seattle, and with such a band of men interested in pushing the affairs of their own churches and of the denomination much good work may be expected.

SPOKANE WASHINGTON.

By Iorwerth.

Rev. W. A. Sunday is conducting a series of meetings in this city. The Tabernacle, seating 8,000 people, is filled every night, despite the severe weather—as low as 20 degrees below zero. Despite his peculiarities he is a great, mighty, cyclonic, tremendously earnest and overwhelmingly enthusiastic preacher. He sweeps everything before him and paralyzes the spirit of criticism on the part of those who hear him. He preaches sermons that, from an intellectual standpoint, compare favorably with our leading preachers, and his oratorical flights are unsurpassed. He feels the burden of souls and is on fire with a desire to arouse the churchs and church members from their spiritual lethargy. He preaches on great themes, such as, Revivals, The Home, The Withered Hand, Prayer, Ten Commandments, Soul Saving. There is nothing superficial in his preaching, but they are searching, scathing services, humorous, and always marvelously interesting . Spokane is being moved as never befoer. The powers of darkness are trembling. Some hundreds are already hopefully converted. It is expected that the number will reach the thousands. There are 52 churches united in the movement.

On the 13th there was held an Inland Empire Ministerial Conference in the Tabernacle. Mr. Sunday preached on "Why Ministers Fail." It was a carefully prepared discourse and full of searching truths. He spoke as plainly to the ministers—there were several hundred present—as to others I believe this religious campaign will do untold good, not only to this city, but to the whole Inland Empire It is greatly needed because the churches as a rule have become appallingly materialistic, selfish, worldly, lpeasure loving and ungodly. "O Lord, revive thy work."

Rev. C. N. Pledges, Mr. Sunday's first assistant, gave a practical address before the Congregational Ministerial Alliance on the morning of the 12th. He preached three times at Medical Lake on Sunday the 11th. He is also a good preacher and efficient evangelist.

"Alive and well: Oh blissful thought!
In some sweet clime, I know not where;
I only know that you are there,
And sickness, pain, and death are not."

DEATH OF MRS. CHALFANT, OF CLOVERDALE.

On the morning of January 9, very suddenly, while in the act of dressing in her own room, Mrs. Chalfant was transplanted to the Paradise of God. It came as a great shock to the members of her family, but the sudden transition was for her a blissful exchange . She naturally shrank from suffering, and in mercy she was spared the pains of a lingering illness, and passed away without knowing death Her loss will be keenly felt in the Congregational Church—the Chalfant Memorial Church—which through her generosity was built, and she will be greatly missed in the town of Cloverdale.

In her frail, tiny body there lived a great and sweet soul. She was a true follower of the Christ . Her religion was a living reality. She was extremely modest and unassuming, but that fact seemed but to enhance her influence and make the light of her life all the more radiant. The unbeliever and the worldling readily granted that she was a Christian.

With the Apostle Paul she could say, "I have kept the faith." She was absolutely true to the fundamentals of Christianity. For her, Jesus Christ was the eternal Son of God and the Saviour of sinful men. It pained her to hear of others drifting from the Christ and His atoning work. Often she was heard to say, "Take that away and the foundation is gone."

Her love for the Church was deep and strong. She was hardly ever absent from the services Sunday or week-day, and she nourished her soul on the preached Word. Her sympathy was very real and far-reaching . No story of want or distress failed to stir her tender spirit, and many have found her to be a friend in need. Her benevolence was a beautiful feature in her Christian character.

She lived well day by day, always had her house in order, and was ready when ever the summons might come. Her life is her own memorial. Mrs. Chalfant was born at Granby, Connecticut, on September 1, 1834. Her father was Chester Hayes and her mother Fidelia Holcomb. There were nine in the family and only one brother survives. Fortunately, this brother and his wife, Mr. and Ms. Hayes, of Southern Pines, North Carolina, were visiting Mrs. Chalfant at the time of her death, and they have been a great comfort to the bereaved daughters and granddaughters.

Mrs. Chalfant was a school teacher in her early years and in the spring of 1858, following a break-down in her health, she came to California. The sea voyage restored her. On January 1, 1862, she was united in marriage to John E. Chalfant, and they lived happily together until he died, in Cloverdale, on March 25, 1905. Two daughters survive to mourn the loss of their mother—Mrs. Mattie Porterfield, and Miss Nellie Chalfant. Two granddaughters also deeply grieve the loss of such a grandmother—Misses Alice and Helen Porterfield.

On Monday, January 11, Mrs. Chalfant was interred by the side of her husband in the Riverside Cemetery, Cloverdale. A brief service was held at the family residence, when the pastor of the church, Rev. Henry Ainsworth, gave a sympathetic address. The public school had a vacation, the stores in town were closed, and a large number of the inhabitants attended the funeral.

Japan has changed the date of the proposed Imperial World's Fair from 1912 to 1917. That will give the California hot-heads time to cool their Oriental wrath.

MORNING VEXATIONS.

A devoted little mother said to me recently, "The hardest part of the day for me is that before school time." I wonder in how many mother's hearts the words find a responsive echo?

To begin with, there is the everyday process of getting children dressed. Shoes and stockings to be worked on plump little feet, buttons mated with buttonholes, tangles smoothed out of hair, cold water judiciously applied, starched blouses or dresses deftly arranged upon squirming little figures these call not only for skilled finders, but calmness of spirit. The easily ruffled tempers of some children, whose fretful hour is not the sleepy one at bedtime but the one before breakfast, do not sweeten the process.

The situation is scarcely improved when little fingers begin to do the work for themselves or for each other. There may be less fretfulness then, but there is more play. To the normal child dressing is an interruption to the real business of life, and in the tumbled bedclothes, disordered pillows and their own untrameled state of semi-undress there are vast possibilities of delight. A glorious unconcern for the flight of time remains even in the last hurrying minutes after the breakfast bell has sounded, and as the mother takes her seat at the table her feeling is easily that of exasperation.

A child's table manners are not apt to be soothing. I have seen a Chinese baby of two handle chop-sticks with a dexterity which I envied, but for an American child to manage knife, fork and spoon seems a different matter. Bad positions about the table, distaste for some article of food, chatter and nonsense and high flow of spirits, interrupting the more sedate conversation of their elders, never seem more annoying. Then there is the liability to accidents. "Like the notorious 'Goups,' " sighs the mother:

They spilt their broth on the table cloth,
O, they lead untidy lives.

Happy the households—are there many in these days?—where quiet settles for a few minutes over the little group as they kneel for family prayers, a truly grateful calm in the squally period.

"Home work" makes the climax to the morning. The word is a direful one in the family. To the older children it represents the chief burden of their lives, to the young a standing grievance, to the mother constant interruption. She is perplexed to know what is the best time for this home study. If she decides on the morning hour it is not because that is ideally good, but only better than the short period of sunshine after school or the tired time after tea. But she knows full well that too often number work of curious reckoning, spelling which conforms to no rules and penmanship for which she blushes will be product of the toilsome effort.

At last the school bell gives warning, and drooping spirits revive. With goodbyes and kisses and shouts the little band tramps out to join the daily pilgrimage to the common Mecca, and within the home the reign of peace begins.

How do we mothers meet these mornings, often experienced, if not always so turbulent? Two principles, I believe, ought to guide us. There is a Chinese saying which runs somewhat in this wise: Patience, patience, patience! Of all virtue patience is the most indispensable." This is the

first and greatest need, to be prayed for with every evning petition and in our first waking moments.

The other is better generalship. This chaotic period can doubtless be brought to a greater degree under "the reign of law." One never sees such a commotion over getting dressed among children on a farm where there are duties, in doors and out, regularly required of them. Before real work a matter like that sinks into insignifiance. Many of our problems arise because the sturdier qualities are not being called out in children. But just as sterner duties develop obedience and dispatch, so it is quite posible for a firm demand, not irritable but infexible, on the part of the parent to bring about similar results. "Mamma expects you to learn your lessons without fretting"—such requirements will bring many a little loiterer to time. If thus the home machinery can be made to run more smoothly, is it not a better way than heroically to endure the friction?—Lucy Ward Beecher.

THE HOME.

A Bit of Cheerful Philosophy.

By being careful to want nothing that we could not have, we have always had all that we wanted." This bit of cheerful philosophy, which is well worth pondering in our luxurious age, was uttered by Amos Dresser, a home missionary who died not long ago at the ripe age of ninety-one. This remarkable man so unlike most of us in having all that he wanted, preached sixty years on an average salary of less than $400 per year, laboring in various churches in Ohio, Michigan and Nebraska, and leaving everywhere the impress of a consecrated life. Notwithstanding the meagerness of his salary, he always gave one-tenth of his income to the Lord and his marriage fees to poor widows. In his long life of contentment and joyful service he presents a striking contrast to the grasping, luxury-loving man of the world.

The eager striving for that which we cannot have, at least without the sacrifice of something higher, is the curse of our modern life. Too many are trying, as one writer expressed it, to keep up an automobile style on a bicycle income. It is not uncommon in suburban towns for a family to live luxuriously, spending freely and even giving lavishly for a few months, and then to suddenly disappear, leaving unpaid the landlord, the grocer, the coal dealer, and in two cases that have come under the writer's limited personal knowledge, the undertaker who had helped bury their dead.

A recent report of one of our State Boards of Labor and Statistics shows an appaling amount of uncollectible indebtedness, and seems to indicate a growing disposition among the trading and wage-earning classes to go into debt for current living expenses while they are paying cash for luxuries. The report condemns the modern "installment house" method of doing business as conducive to unnecessary purchases, and it charges the middle population with living beyond their means. Showy and shoddy furniture is often bought on the installment plan, and is sometimes lost on account of illness in the family or other misfortune. Silk dresses and elaborate millinery are obtained by the housemaid and the shopgirl in the same way, and are often worn shabby before the last payment becomes due. It is easy to order unnecessary finery when one is not required to pay cash down. Alluring advertisements offering to "loan money on your furniture or your piano at legal rates," tempt the weak and unwary. One would like to pay as you go."

"But suppose I haven't the money," said the youth.

"Then don't go," was the reply.

Living beyond one's means too often leads to dishonest devices to increase one's slender resources. A former chaplain of the Woman's Reformatory Prison in Massachusetts once told the writer that most of the women under her care were brought there by a desire for personal adornment beyond their means. The chaplain of the reformatory for men in the same state, when asked if drinks was the main cause of the crime represented in that institution, replied that he thought it was rather the desire to obtain this world's goods without the equivalent in work. These prisoners had never learned not to want the things that they could honestly have.

Extravagance is acknowledged to be a conspicuous fault of the American people. It was recently stated on good authority that a large proportion of the automobiles owned in a certain city were obtained by mortgaging the home of the owner. If this be true, what a commentary it is on uncontrolled desire! We often want things not so much for their intrinsic value as because other people want them. To keep up with every passing fashion in dress and furniture is beyond the means of multitudes who are able to live very comfortably.

How far can we control our desires, and avoid wanting that which we ought not to have? Is it not by setting our affections on higher things that are within our reach? Agassiz had such an absorbing interest in scientific pursuits that he said he had no time to make money. Luthur Burbank, the great plant breeder, has refused more than one opportunity for amassing a princely fortune in his desire to benefit mankind by giving the world the secret of some wonderful new fruit or flower. To Amos Dresser, as to many others who have lived a life of joyful service for their fellow-men, may be applied the words of the poet:

Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

In order that like him we may be in the happy state of having all that we want. let us be careful not to want what we cannot have.—Emily Tolman.

Young People

ACCORDING TO ST. MARK.

By Mary H. Grosvenor.

"I really think you are a little hard on your namsake." Mrs. McLane's tone was slightly aggrieved, and there was not quite as pleasant an expression as usual upon her comely face.

"I am sure I do not mean to be." This voice was as quiet as the other had been perturbed. "It seems to me had I praised her more, it would have been too much for even a mother to swallow. "

"Oh! I know you said she was well-grown and well-mannered and good looking, far beyond what you had expected in two years, and yet underneath all there was a 'but'—and that " does away with all your commendation."

"What keen ears you mothers have! I was hardly conscious of that 'but.' "

It was there all the same, in italics if not in capitals. Now do tell me what you mean."

"My dear girl," said Miss Egerton, "remember I have only been at home aweek, and after leaving Dorothy a child, I feel thenecessity of renewing my acquaintance with a young woman of fifteen, who almost looks over my head."

"But you are not answering my question," persisted Mrs. McLane. "I hope you did not learn evasion in Germany."

"I hope not, indeed," and with a slightly quizzical smile, Miss Egerton bent lower over her embroidery.

"You think her disobedient?" Mrs. McLane walked to the window and laid one hand upon her sister's shoulder.

Miss Egerton did not reply, but her own hand clasped her sister's

"I don't think she means to be," Mrs. McLane continued. "And, after all she does what is asked for in the end."

"That is perhaps where my 'but' came in," Miss Egerton said, slowly. "She needs to learn obedience according to Saint Mark."

"What do you mean? You are so mysterious!"

"I will explain the mystery to Dorothy some day."

"She is quite as good in that respect as the rest of the girls." Mrs McLane had assumed the defensive.

"But when one loves a child as we do Dorothy," the quiet voice replied, "we want her to be better than the rest of the girls."

Down below in the street a tall girl looked up from a group of her companions and waved a greeting to the two in the window. In a short time her swift step was heard on the stairs, and Dorothy, with roses in her cheeks, brown eyes dancing with health and merrriment, and sunny hair tossed this wayand that by the boisterous wind! She gave each an impetuous, breathless hug, talking rapidly in spite of gasps:

"Oh, Aunt Dolly, it is good to know you are here! I was thinking about it all day. And it eases my conscience, too," with a laugh. "If I knew mother was alone, I would not like to leave her, as I am going to now, and run off to spend the afternoon with Anna Clare."

"Is not that rather a poor way to show your pleasure at my being here?"

"As if you two would miss me when you have those years to talk over and catch up with! So I'll say goodbye to you, and leave you to discuss German housekeeping."

"But, Dorothy, do not forget your hour for music," said her mother, a little anxiously. "You should be at the piano now, and your father told you to prepare some manuscript for him."

"So he did," Dorothy answered, lightly, "and I will do it when I come home.' And away she went without giving her mother time for expostulation.

"I am afraid her father will be seriously offended if Dorothy neglects this paper. The last time he came as near giving her a scolding as John ever can. She does the typewriting so accurately, she is of the greatest service to him when she is prompt."

Mrs McLane gave a little sigh, and her sister felt tempted to echo it, but wisely repressed the inclination, and gave herself once more to her embroidery.

The next afternoon, as Miss Egerton sat in the twilight by the open fire, the door opened and Dorothy came bouncing into the room with her usual impetuosity.

"Aunt Dolly," she said, "how nice to find you alone! Mamma has a flock of visitors, and I have had my cup of tea in here in a very lazy fashion."

"Oh!" disappointment in the long drawn-out exclamation; "then you want to be quiet, and I am just aching to talk!"

Miss Egerton laughed.

"Sit down, dear; there is another low chair for you. I am quite ready to talk."

"Are you sure, Aunt Dolly? I don't want to be selfish about it."

"I am quite sure, so let me relieve you of that aching as soon as possible."

"Aunt Dolly," the girl commenced, impetuously, "mother says you don't approve of mee."

"Did she put it exactly in that way?"

"Well, perhaps not. She told me a great many nice things you said about me, but—she said there was a 'but' and I want to know what it stands for."

"Have you not the least idea, Dorothy?"

The honest eyes met her aunt's squarely.

"Perhaps I have deep down in my heart," said Dorothy, slowly, with reddening checks.

"Well?"

"You think me procrastinating."

Miss Egerton was silent.

"And sometimes disobedient?"

No answer.

"But, Aunt Dolly," said the girl pleadingly, "I always mean to do as I am told, and I do, too, after a while."

Miss Egerton smiled.

"Aunt Dolly, don't be dumb any longer. Mother says you want me to learn some sort of obedience. What sort do I need.

"I said you should learn obedience according to Saint Mark."

Dorothy stared. "What do you mean? I don't remember that he was any more obedient than the others."

"Suppose you light the lamp and get my Bible from the stand. There is half an hour still before dinner, and in that time I think I can make you understand what sort of obedience this is."

When Dorothy returned to her place, Bible in hand, Miss Egerton said: "Open to the first chapter of Mark and the eighteenth verse."

"And straightway they forsook their nets, " Dorothy read, wonderingly.

"Now the second chapter and twelfth verse."

" 'And immediately he arose. ' "

"The same word as 'straightway,' Dorothy," said her aunt. "Now the fifth chapter and forty-second verse."

" 'And straightway the damsel arose.' "

"The sixth chapter and forty-fifth verse."

" 'And straightway—' " the girl began; " 'Aunt Dolly, are there many more?"

"A great many more. But, my dear girl, are not these enough to help you understand what I mean by obedience according to Saint Mark?"

Dorothy was silent for some minutes and her answer, when it came, was very gently spoken.

"Aunt Dolly, straightway' obedience. That was better than twenty scoldings. Think of my delayed obedience and all the trouble it causes! In two days I have worried father about his paper, and neglected mother's errands, and mailed your letter when I was ready, too late to reach your friend before she started for Europe. I wish I could be 'straightway' obedient, but how am I to remember?"

For answer, Miss Egerton put into her hand a copy of the Gospel of Saint Mark. "I would read it carefully, if I were you; and you must not be discouraged."—Youth's Companion.

UNCLE NED'S HELP BOX.

"Tom found wheeling in the pile of wood one of the hard things!"

"It takes so long!" he fretfully exclaimed. "I'll never get done. Grandpa always makes me do the hard things!"

Uncle Ned was on the veranda, hidden away behind the woodbone. It had been less than three days since the beginning of his visit, and already in that time he had discovered Tom's failing—the "general," grandma called it, since this one was so mcuh more noticeable than any other.

"He makes mountains of ant-hills," and Uncle Ned smiled to himself, as he peered through the green vines before him.

He thought for a moment.

"I wonder if my old 'help box' wouldn't be good for Tom—or one just like it. I remember how it aided me. I believe I'll try it," and Uncle Ned went quickly into the house.

"Got a box, mother—about this size?" and Uncle Ned measured with his two hands.

"Why, yes. I shouldn't wonder—want it now?"

"If it's handy. I don't want to make any trouble."

"No trouble in the world," briskly, and Mrs. Newcomb pulled out a long, deep drawer from the hall closet.

"This'll do!" Uncle Ned took up a small white box. "It's just what I want—not too large."

Uncle Ned carried it to his room, where he remained for nealy two hours.

"There!" when it was finished; "I guess that is as good a 'help box' as the one I had. Now if it does as much for Tom as mine did for me, 'magic helper," wouldn't be a bad name for it."

Tom was still wheeling in the wood from the slowly diminishing pile when Uncle Ned once more returned to the veranda.

"I'll never get it done—never!" The voice was full of impatient discouragement.

"Want some help, Tom?" called Uncle Ned.

Tom looked up abashed.

"Why, yes; but you'd better not come—perhaps grandpa might not"—

"Oh, he won't mind—not this kind of help!"

Tom eyed the box Uncle Ned carried, suspiciously.

"This is the help."

"That? That's only a box!" Tom looked incredulous.

"But it's a 'help box'—you'll see!" Uncle Ned mysteriously off one of the bands.

"Help box!" Still Tom was not convinced.

Uncle Ned smiled—one of the "silent kind"—at Tom's puzzled face.

"I'm going to leave it here—you may keep it," explained Uncle Ned. "It's full of magic helpers, and when you have anything hard to do, open it and take out No. 1!"

"Thank—you! I hope 'twill help me get in this pile of wood."

"It will—see if it doesn't."

After Uncle Ned had gone, Tom shyly took off the cover from the little white "help box."

"They're only cards," disappointedly. But he took out one "according to directions," and read it: "Remember, it's only one stick at a time."

"I don't see how you're going to help much."

But it did, for it showed Tom that he didn't have to wheel in the whole pile at once. And one stick at a time wasn't hard—there couldn't be anything easier.

The next day grandpa asked Tom to weed the onion bed —'twas just a small one.

"Oh, dear!" and Tom sighed gloomily.

"Perhaps the 'help box' "—'Twas Uncle Ned's suggestion.

Tom opened it after he reached the garden, and took out Help 2: "A laugh makes an things easy."

At the thought of the curious little helper Tom laughed in spite of himself, and he was cheerful till the job was done. Weeding didn't seem "a bit hard!"

"I guess they do help," concluded Tom.

The afternoon before baking day grandma asked Tom to fill up the big wood-box, as she would be obliged to keep a fire nearly all day. Tom was just starting fishing.

Two little "put-off" puckers began to gather on the troubled forehead.

"Can't I wait until"—then he ran for Help3, "Duty first; fun afterwards."

"That's the best way," agreed Tom with the little helper. "I'd be thinking all the time of having it to do—. 'twould spoil just half the fun!"

When Help 4 was needed 'twas ready: "Attack in parts."

"It's most like No. 1," thought Tom.

"But 'twouldn't hurt if 'twas No. 1 over again—it's such a splendid helper!"

Help 5 whisked Tom's Saturday chores away in half the time it usually took him to do them: "A thing begun is quite half done."

And Tom was so apt to put off his work, he dreaded it so.

"Well, how's the 'help box' aiding?" asked Uncle Ned. 'Twas two weeks after Tom had received it.

"Just great! Things aren't half so hard to do—not when you've magic helpers!"—Albert C. Caldwell, in Zion's Herald.

A BRAVE LEGISLATOR.

One of the Assemblymen at Sacramento is credited with the following eruption:

"President Roosevelt may send all the telegrams he desires and Tokio may boil and froth to its heart's content but neither Roosevelt nor Tokio can deter me from presenting my anti-Japanese measures to the legislature. If Japan thinks she has cause for war that is her business. In introducing my anti-Japanese bills I did only what I thought was right. Japan can have war if she wishes it."

There is nothing in the statutes of California to prevent a man from exercising his subliminal right to make a simpleton of himself. The seismograph in Tokio no doubt recorded the shock from Sacramento. If some folks were half as big and half as important as they imagine they are the center of gravity would be changed. It is easy to be brave when there is no danger in sight.

This same particular solon added:

"You have never seen me back out of any fight I ever started. To be sure I did quit my anti-Japanese fight two years ago when Roosevelt requested us to do so but I don't intend to quit this year. I am going ahead despite the president and all Japan." These are brave words. They fairly make one shudder. We did not think man could rise to such a frenzy of courage. The speaker seems to have been in close quarters. President Roosevelt on one side, Japan and the deep sea on the other is indeed a predicament from which one might well wish to be delivered. When a man passes the point of being afraid of Roosevelt and Japan combined he may be said to have reached the highest point of human courage.

NO RECOMMENDATION.

"Please, sir, do you want a boy?" It was a low, clear voice, with just the faintest tremor of apprehension in it. He stood of the counting-room, hat in hand, his clothing neat and clean, his attitude waiting and deferential. The long, well-filled counters in the narrow room were lost in deep perspective. Clerks hurried hither and thither. In the rear of the store were heard the sound of hammers and the creaking of the elevator. Though it was but nine o'clock in the morning, and the sun shining brightly outside, it was so gloomy in the storeroom that the gas had to be lighted.

"Do I want a boy?" asked the owner of the store, turning around in his chair and looking sharply over the top of his spectacles. "What can you do?"

"Make myself useful, I hope," replied the boy.

"O, a general utility man!" and Mr. Lansing laughed. "Can you write?"

"I am a graduate of the high school, sir."

"Are you? That speaks well for you. What is your name?"

"Gabriel Winchester."

"Is your father living?"

"He died when I was a child."

Mr. Lansing eyed him more keenly when he said that, and also more kindly.

"I am the only support of my mother," the boy said, his voice husky; "almost the only support. She manages to secure work one day in the week."

The merchant was pleased with the boy's preciseness.

The head bookkeeper, an old gray-haired gentleman with a benign face, had turned from his desk, attracted by the boy's voice and the character of his replies.

"Where were you last employed?' Mr. Lansing asked.

"At the office of the Argus."

"As a compositor?"

"No, but I had expected to be. I was clerk in the office, sir."

Mr. Lansing took off his glasses and wiped them. "Have you any recommendations?" he then asked.

"No, sir."

"Why not?"

The lad's lips trembled. "I—was—discharged," came at last, in a faint voice.

"O, that is it, eh?" and Mr. Lansing frowned. "No wonder they gave you no recommendation. It strikes me you do not lack assurance. No, I do not want a boy." He spoke with heedless acrimony, wheeled around in his chair, and resumed his paper. He was a church member, and admired nothing so much as integrity of character. Capacity, reliability and a stainless reputation were three things upon which he insisted in the selection of his employes.

The boy's face fell, and he turned to go; but the bookkeeper made him a sign to wait for a few moments. He had been strangely drawn to the boy.

"Mr. Lansing," the bookkeeper said respectfully, "perhaps it was candor in the boy, and not assurance. Will you allow me to ask him a question?"

"O, a dozen of them," replied Mr. Lansing crustily, not lifting his eyes from his paper.

"Perhaps you should have made one more inquiry," the bookkeeper said. "My lad, why were you discharged?"

"Because I would not work on the Lord's day," came back the reply, steadily and bravely.

"What is that you say?" It was Mr. Lansing who spoke, and in a tone quicker and louder than was usual with him.

"I was discharged because I would not work on the Lord's day," the lad repeated. "They started a Sunday paper in the office last week. The men and boys laughed at me, but I did not care. I could not work on that day, sir." There was a resolute look on his face, and he seemed to grow an inch or two taller.

"No; and you were right," declared Mr. Lansing, in a strong, gratified voice. "Just sit down a minute." His opinion of the boy had entirely changed. He hurriedly left the counting-room. In fifteen minutes he returned. He had been over to the office of the Argus. The boy's story was correct. The proprietor of the paper, a crusty, impatient old gentleman, had nothing to say in the boy's favor, but the editor was pronounced in his praise. "I do want a boy," Mr. Lansing said, as he placed his hand on the petitioner's head. "I believe you will suit me. Come here at this hour tomorrow morning."

A grateful look shone on the boy's face. "Thank you, sir," he said, and then withdrew.

"Mr. Doyle," said Mr. Lansing to the head bookkeeper, "you have taught me a lesson. It is possible for us to come wide of the truth, and do great injustice to another, simply by asking one question too few."—Selected.

"PUGGIE" AND "THEO."

By G. W. Payne.

"Puggie" was a little dog, a pretty little fellow with bright brown mischievous eyes, and a tail which curled over into a circle, and a face all puckered and wrinkled, and pug-nose as impudent as any intelligent puppy-dog's nose could well be. He was not much more than an over-grown puppy in age and size, and he was just as mischievous as all overgrown puppies, whether dogs or humans, always are.

"Theo" was a bright little chap between three and four years old. He was the only boy in the family, and I'm afraid a bit spoiled. Sometimes he was not as considerate for the feelings of his playmate "Puggie" as he might have been. Little boys sometimes are a bit cruel to their cat and dog pets without just meaning to be so. It was like that with "Theo."

They were playing to gether out on the front veranda. Theo chased Puggie and Puggie chased Theo round an empty flower stand. Sometimes Theo would scramble up the stand and Puggie would tumble backwards when he tried to follow. Puggie got tired and out of breath. He sat for a while looking at Theo, sometimes giving a short bark, but finally trotted off to a shady corner and lay down. Angry at the desertion of his playmate, Theo climbed down.

"If you wont come yourself, I'll make you," he said, at the same time clutching Puggie's curly tail and dragging him hind-end first out to the middle of the floor.

Now, being plucked by the tail hurt Puggie a wee bit, and hurt his temper more. When dogs get bad-tempered they bite. Puggie was too well-trained, and too fond of Theo to realy hurt him in this way, but he growled very savagely, and flew round seizing Theo by the trousers.

Nothing like this had ever before happened to Theo. He was so frightened for a moment that he could neither breathe nor speak. But when Puggie, entering into the mischief of the position began to drag him backwards over the floor, poor Theo yelled and struggled to get free. Theo's father was in the next room; when Theo screamed he rushed to the doorway wondering what had happened. As he reached the doorway Theo was dragging Puggie along the floor, for Puggie wouldn't let go, and was shouting, "Oh, Lord make me a good boy! Oh, Lord make me a good boy!"

Poor Theo was in such dread of being gobbled up that he was praying to God for deliverance in the only way he could think of at the moment. But his father said, when telling the incident afterwards, there were many like Theo who begin to pray only after Puggie gets them by the seat of the pants. What he meant was that some people forget their need of the help and blessing of God until some dreadful peril overtakes them. You boys won't be like that, will you?—The Methodist.

DIAMONDS NEED TO BE RECUT.

Precious Truths Learned from Precious Stones.

The famous Isabella diamond, alleged to be one of the original gems pawned by Queen Isabella of Spain to pay for the voyage of Columbus, which resulted in the discovery of America, was sold at auction and brought less than $20,000. The diamond shows the effect of age and in order to restore its brilliancy it will have to be recut.

Men, like diamonds, lose their brilliancy. There is nothing like the dust of this world to destroy the flush and sparkle of youth. When lost there is only one way to gain again the brilliancy, that is, to recut the gem. Life never shows its brilliancy till it is recut. When the crudities of life are taken away then it is that our real life has a chance.

Education is an instrument by which life is recut. Morality is the wheel and spirtuality the emery on the wheel, upon which life is turned. The recent life is the new cut life. Old things have been taken away, all things in the life have become new. This recutting process goes on continually. Many things we learn that we have to unlearn. Many things we forget that we have to relearn. This unlearning, relearning, learning, recutting make the processes of life. No life is of value till it shines; to shine it must be polished; to be polished it must be recut. Lives that are dull and uninteresting are lives that have not been polished. The diamond was unconscious of its brilliancy until it was called out.

UNACCUSTOMED DUTIES.

The other day a woman whose life had been filled with busy days and all the multitudinous duties of a home, and who had at last been set free from care in a long, restful visit, said: "I do not feel as if I ought to sit down long in the morning to read that book. Haven't you any work I could do? It seems wrong not to be doing something else besides reading the first part of the day."

In the same house lives a student, a man whose bread is earned by the fruit of his brain. Thinking and writing have been his daily task for years; and when the necessity of experience has once or twice induced him to leave his usual occupation to cultivate his garden or mow his lawn, he has come back to the study with a condemning feeling of idleness. "There!" he exclaims, "I have wasted this whole forenoon."

Both incidents are illustrations of the undue emphasis which all of us are apt to place upon the importance of our customary work and the difficulty with which we move out from our old rut of duty into a new and perhaps wider pathway. It is a fault to which a conscientious person is especially prone. The new opportunity is pleasing; it seems easier and more inviting from its very novelty. But work has always been a burden hitherto; our duties have not worn so attractive a guise. Are we doing right in laying aside our old anxieties and cares? It cannot be that we ought to do what appears so delightful and so we cling to the old footpath and refuse to slip down the burden from our shoulders.

How many a mother finds it difficult to hand over the baby to another's faithful watching and go with her husband on the little pleasure trip which he has lovingly planned and anticipated! How many husbands are reluctant to leave the office an hour earlier for the sake of that drive and picnic lunch with the children!

One day long ago, in the little town of Bethany, two women welcomed a most remarkable guest—the Man who had set all Palestine astir, who had drawn multitudes after him and turned many lives from mourning into gladness. There were household duties to be done that day as other days—the dishes had been soiled, and the house was not in perfect order—but into this day, full of its commonplace tasks, had come a wonderful opportunity. One of the women let the old duty wait for a little; but the other, conscientious and faithful as she was, was blinded by her very devotion to the right, so that she did not appreciate the precious privilege which was offered her.

It seems strange that this little incident and the very words of Jesus to the woman should have been preserved. It was such a trivial thing that a woman should have been so anxious about the housework and perhaps worried for fear the dinner would not prove appetizing that she did not take time to talk with Jesus. But it is the very lesson which is perhaps needed most by hundreds of busy wives and earnest Christians.—Mrs. Ozora S. Davis, in Zion's Herald.

THE VERY BEST THING.

Once on a time a sweet little girl
Sat close to grandmother's knee,
Trying to plan for her Christmas gifts,
As busy as she could be.

She had very many friends to love,
But her purse was very small;
How could she make those few pennies buy
Enough to gladden all?

So the little face more sober grew,
The chattering tongue quite still,
Till grandma said, "What's the matter, dear,
Are you tired or feeling ill?"

Then into grandmother's lap she climbed
And nestled her curly head;
She told her troubles with tearful eyes,
And this was what grandma said:

"Love is the best thing in the world,
Of that you have a large store,
You may give and give and give and give,
And always have plenty more.

"And so the pure gold will far outweigh
The prettiest gilded toys;
So is the dear love of friend for friend
Most precious of Christmas joys.

"Little willing feet and helping hands
Obeying with smiling face,
'Mong the Christmas gifts to dear mamma
Will have the very first place."

—Ruth Davenport.

Many of our milionaires are doing nobly; but it is stil the comparatively poor, rich only in faith, who, by the aggregating of small resources, will do most for the betterment of society.

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